U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
White River Field Office
73544 Hwy 64
Meeker, CO 81641

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

NUMBER: CO-110-2005-123-EA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER (optional): Davis Creek Allotment (06016), Robinson Pasture

PROJECT NAME: Grazing Permit Renewal for Howard Robinson (0501492)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Legal Discription					
Allotment		BLM			
Name	No.	Acres	Twp.	Range	Section(s)/Lots or Portions Of
Davis Creek	06016	263	3 S.	94 W.	28, 29, 32, 33

APPLICANT: Howard Robinson (0501492)

ISSUES AND CONCERNS (optional):

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES:

Background/Introduction: All references to the Davis Creek allotment within this document will apply to the Robinson Pasture of the Davis Creek allotment only, as the grazing permit (0501492) only authorizes use on this pasture. The Davis Creek allotment is located approximately 19 miles south of Meeker, Colorado in Rio Blanco County. Within the allotment, a portion of the Highway 13 right-of-way fence forms the eastern boundary with other private land fences forming the remainder of the eastern allotment boundary. A fence running the ridgeline west of Highway 13 forms the western boundary with other adjoining fencelines creating the north and south boundaries. The extreme southern portion of the allotment contacts the Piceance Creek road (Rio Blanco County Road 5). Overall, the entire allotment in encased by fences (see attached allotment map).

Within the allotment, a major ridgeline that parallels Highway 13 contours in a north to south direction with moderate/steep slopes descending east that drains into Piceance Creek. Elevation ranges from 7239 feet in a drainage located in the northeast portion of the allotment to 8178 feet along the ridgeline in the southwest. Annual precipitation on the allotment averages 16-20 inches per year.

Two distinct vegetation communities are located within the allotment: 1) pinion-juniper / mountain shrub on east facing slopes, 2) Big sagebrush / intermixed native grasslands within drainages and lowlands. The majority of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administrated lands are located along the ridgeline/slopes forming the western boundary of the allotment, with private lands mostly located within the bottoms and flats.

When the Robinson Pasture of the Davis Creek allotment was originally created in 1992, the grazing permit's Percent Public Land (% PL), which is the percentage of active BLM Animal Unit Months (AUMs) in relation to total AUMs (BLM & private AUMs), apparently included private lands, which are fenced separate from the pasture, and are not controlled by Howard Robinson. When this uncontrolled private land was included in the grazing permit's % PL calculation, it artificially over-compensated private land forage production. Thus, the erroneous calculation lowered the % PL from the actual percentage of private versus public forage production within the pasture. The proposed action has recalculated the % PL based upon private land production in relation to BLM land production.

Grazing allotments within the White River Field Office (WRFO) have been placed in one of three management categories that define the intensity of management: (1) Improve, (2) Custodial and (3) Maintain. These categories broadly define rangeland management objectives in response to an analysis of an allotment's resource characteristics, potential, opportunities, and needs.

Allotment Categorization for the Davis Creek allotment is Improve. This categorization includes the entire Davis Creek allotment. However, the Robinson Pasture of the Davis Creek allotment, which Howard Robinson is authorized use on, is a small pasture in the overall allotment with a large percentage of this pasture being private land owned by Mr. Robinson.

The table below is an acre breakdown by land status within the Davis Creek allotment.

Breakdown of Acres Controlled by Howard Robinson (0501492)					
Allotment		BLM Acres	State Acres	Private Acres	Total Acres
Name	No.				
Davis Creek - Robinson Pasture	06016	263	0	348	611

A. Proposed Action: Renewal of Howard Robinson's grazing permit (0501492) on the Robinson Pasture of the Davis Creek allotment for a 10 year period as outlined in the proposed grazing permit table below.

Proposed Grazing Permit (0501492)										
Allotment		Livestock		Date		% PL	BLM AUMs	Active AUMs	Susp. AUMs	Total AUMs
Name	No.	Number	Kind	On	Off					
Davis Creek – Robinson Pasture	06016	300	S	05/10	06/20	18%	**15**	**30**	**0**	**30**
		300	S	09/20	11/01	18%	**15**			

The proposed action was developed in conjunction with the grazing permit holder (Howard Robinson) and is outlined on the submitted *Application for Grazing Permit Renewal* form signed by Mr. Robinson on 07/28/05.

The proposed action is an alteration of the season of use by sheep, thereby changing turn on and turn off dates for the allotment. This change is from 119 days of sheep use to 85 days, which equates to a total reduction of 34 days of use (29%) of total days authorized. Total BLM Active Animal Unit Months (AUMs) will remain at 30, however the percent public land (% PL), which is the percentage of active BLM Animal Unit Months (AUMs) in relation to total AUMs (BLM & private AUMs), was recalculated at 18% PL from the previous 12% thereby necessitating the above changes.

Also, the proposal is to separate this Robinson pasture from the Davis Creek allotment to form its own allotment, now known the Robinson allotment. The rational for separating this pasture into its own allotment is that the pasture is completely fenced separate from the Davis Creek allotment and has a different grazing permit holder. Therefore, Gus Halandras (0501416) will be the sole grazing permittee on the Davis Creek allotment and Howard Robinson (0501492) will be the sole grazing permittee on the Robinson allotment. This document may still reference the newly proposed Robinson allotment as the Robinson pasture of the Davis Creek allotment or simply as the Davis Creek allotment.

Rangeland Improvements Necessary to Implement the Grazing System:
No rangeland improvements (RI) are proposed to implement the grazing system. Future evaluations of allotment conditions may identify improvements that would aid in achieving objectives. In which case, a separate EA would be compiled to approve any such new RI on a site specific basis. No existing RI, except boundary fences, occurs on BLM administrated portions of the allotment.

Grazing Permit Terms and Conditions:
The following terms and conditions as required by 43 CFR 4130.3 would be included in the grazing permit issued under this alternative:

1. It is unlawful for the permittee, agents or employees to knowingly disturb or collect cultural, historical or paleontological materials on public lands. If cultural, historical or paleontological materials are found, including human remains, funerary items or objects of cultural patrimony. The permittee is to stop activities that might disturb such materials, and notify the authorized officer immediately.

2. No grazing use can be authorized under this grazing permit/lease during any period of delinquency in the payment of amounts due in settlement for unauthorized grazing use.

3. Grazing use authorized under this grazing permit/lessee may be suspended, in whole or in part, for violation by the permittee/lessee of any of the provisions of the rules or regulations now or hereafter approved by the Secretary of the Interior.

4. This grazing permit/lease is subject to cancellation, in whole or in part, at any time because of:

a. Noncompliance by the permittee/lessee with rules and regulations now or hereafter approved by the Secretary of the Interior.
b. Loss of control by the permittee/lessee of all or a part of the property upon which it is based.
c. A transfer of grazing preference by the permittee/lessee to another party.
d. A decrease in the lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management within the allotment(s) described herein.
e. Repeated willful unauthorized grazing use

5. This grazing permit/lease is subject to the provisions of executive Order NO. 11246 of September 24, 1965, as amended, which sets forth nondiscrimination clauses. A copy of this order may be obtained from the authorized officer.

6. The permittee or lessee must provide reasonable administrative access across private and leased lands to the BLM for the orderly management and protection of the public lands, as outlined 43 CFR 4130.3-2(h).

7. The permittee/lessee must own or control and be responsible for the management of the livestock authorized to graze under this grazing permit/lease.

8. The authorized officer may require counting and/or additional/special marking or tagging of the livestock authorized to graze under this grazing permit/lease.

9. The permittee's/lessee's grazing case file is available for public inspection as required by the Freedom of Information Act.

10. In order to improve livestock distribution on the public lands, all salt blocks and/or mineral supplements will not be placed within a 1/4 mile of any riparian area, wet meadow, or watering facility (either permanent or temporary) unless stipulated though a written agreement or decision in accordance with 43 CFR 4130.3-2(c).

11. In accordance with 43 CFR 4130.8-1(F): Failure to pay grazing bills within 15 days of the due date specified in the bill shall result in a late fee assessment. Payment made later than 15 days after the due date, shall include the appropriate late fee assessment. Failure to make payment within 30 days may be a violation of 43 CFR Sec. 4140.1(b) (1) and shall result in action by the authorized officer under 43 CFR Secs. 4150.1 and 4160.1-2 (Trespass).

B. Continuation of Current Management Alternative: Re-issuance of Howard Robinson's current grazing permit for the Robinson pasture of the Davis Creek allotment with no changes for a 10 year period as outlined below:

Current Grazing Permit (0501492)										
Allotment		Livestock		Date		%	BLM	Active	Susp.	Total
Name	No.	Number	Kind	On	Off	PL	AUMs	AUMs	AUMs	AUMs

Current Grazing Permit (0501492)										
Allotment		Livestock		Date		%	BLM	Active	Susp.	Total
Name	No.	Number	Kind	On	Off	PL	AUMs	AUMs	AUMs	AUMs
Davis Creek	06016	300	S	05/01	07/01	12%	**15**	**30**	**0**	**30**
		300	S	09/20	11/15	12%	**14**			

C. No Grazing Alternative: No livestock will be authorized on BLM administrated lands located on the current permitted Robinson Pasture of the Davis Creek allotment. Therefore, Howard Robinson's grazing permit (0501492) will not be renewed.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT CARRIED FORWARD: None

NEED FOR THE ACTION: The grazing permit (0501492) for the Robinson Pasture of the Davis Creek allotment (06016) originally expired on 02/28/02 and was reissued under an Appropriations Rider by way of the authority of Section 328, Title 3, Division F of H.J. Res. 2, consolidated appropriations resolutions of 2003 (P.L. 108-7), which was enacted on 02/20/03.

The rational for issuing the permit under the Appropriations Rider was due to BLM workload priorities as no work had been completed in accordance to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) at the time of permit expiration. Therefore, the Environmental Assessment (EA) of this document will serve in meeting NEPA requirements which will analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed grazing permit.

Grazing permits are subject to renewal or transfer at the discretion of the Secretary of the Interior for a period of up to 10 years. The BLM has the authority to renew the livestock grazing permit/lease consistent with the provision of the *Taylor Grazing Act, Public Rangelands Improvement Act, Federal Land Policy and Management Act, and the White River Resource Area Resource Management Plan* (RMP*)*. This Plan has been amended by the *Standards for Public Land Health in Colorado*.

In order to graze livestock on public land, the livestock permittee must hold a valid grazing permit. The grazing permittee has a preference right to receive the permit, if grazing is to continue. The RMP allows for grazing to continue on this allotment.

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3):

Name of Plan: White River Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (ROD/RMP).

Date Approved: July 1, 1997

Decision Number/Page: 2-10, 2-22 through 2-26

Decision Language: "Sustain a landscape composed of plant community mosaics that represent successional stages and distribution patterns that are consistent with natural and regeneration regimes, and compatible with the goals identified in Standard Three of the Standards for Public Land Health" (2-10). Also, as stated on page 2-10, the objective of the livestock management program is to improve the rangeland forage resources by managing toward or at a desired plant community (potential natural plant community).

"Maintain or enhance a healthy rangeland vegetative composition and species diversity, capable of supplying forage at a sustained yield to meet the demand for livestock grazing. Provide for adequate forage plant growth and/or regrowth opportunity necessary to : 1) replenish the plants food reserves; and 2) produce sufficient seed to meet the reproduction needs necessary to maintain an ecological presence in the plant community " (2-22 through 2-23).

COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 302 OF FLPMA RELATIVE TO THE COMB WASH GRAZING DECISION: A review of applicable planning documents and a thoughtful consideration of the new issues and new demands for the use of the public lands involved with these allotments have been made. This analysis concludes that the current multiple use allocation of resources is appropriate.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT / ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES / MITIGATION MEASURES:

STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC LAND HEALTH: In January 1997, Colorado Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approved the Standards for Public Land Health. These standards cover upland soils, riparian systems, plant and animal communities, threatened and endangered species, and water quality. Standards describe conditions needed to sustain public land health and relate to all uses of the public lands. Because a standard exists for these five categories, a finding must be made for each of them in an environmental analysis. These findings are located in specific elements listed below:

STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC LAND HEALTH							
	Current Situation			With Proposed Action		With No Grazing	
Standard	Acres Achieving or Moving Towards Achieving	Acres Not Achieving	Causative Factors	Acres Achieving or Moving Towards Achieving	Acres Not Achieving	Acres Achieving or Moving Towards Achieving	Acres Not Achieving
#1-Upland Soils							
Davis Creek (06016), Robinson Pasture	263	0		263	0	263	0
#2-Riparian Systems							

STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC LAND HEALTH							
	Current Situation			With Proposed Action		With No Grazing	
Standard	**Acres Achieving or Moving Towards Achieving**	**Acres Not Achieving**	**Causative Factors**	**Acres Achieving or Moving Towards Achieving**	**Acres Not Achieving**	**Acres Achieving or Moving Towards Achieving**	**Acres Not Achieving**
Davis Creek (06016), Robinson Pasture	N/A	N/A	No riparian.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
#3-Plant Communities							
Davis Creek (06016), Robinson Pasture	263	0		263	0	263	0
#3-Animal Communities							
Davis Creek (06016), Robinson Pasture	263	0	No issues currently	263	0	263	0
#4-Special Status, T&E Species							
Davis Creek (06016), Robinson Pasture	263	0	No issues currently	263	0	263	0
#5-Water Quality (stream miles)							
Davis Creek (06016), Robinson Pasture	0.58	0	No issues currently	0.58	0	0.58	0

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

AIR QUALITY

Affected Environment: The proposed grazing permit renewal is not located within a 20 mile radius of any special designated airsheds or non attainment areas. Extending grazing rights to this allotment will have little (if any) impacts on air quality.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: None

Environmental Consequences of the Continuation of Current Management Alternative: None

Environmental Consequences of the No Grazing Alternative: None

Mitigation: None

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: There are no recorded sites in the Robinson Pasture of the Davis Creek allotment. A Class III pedestrian inventory of a random 30 acres of the pasture revealed no new cultural resource materials.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: None

Environmental Consequences of the Continuation of Current Management Alternative: None

Environmental Consequences of the No Grazing Alternative:

Mitigation: 1. Should disturbance inadvertently, unintentionally, or unknowingly occur uncovering cultural resource materials, the operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they may be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not necessary)
- a timeframe for the AO to complete an expedited review under 36 CFR 800-11 to confirm, through the State Historic Preservation Officer, that the findings of the AO are correct and that mitigation is appropriate.

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

2. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

3. Any proposed disturbance on BLM surface will be treated as a new and independent action.

INVASIVE, NON-NATIVE SPECIES

Affected Environment: Common mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*) is located on a limited basis within the sagebrush community on the allotment. Its existence is mostly limited to private lands and is lightly scattered across the landscape. Mullein is an introduced species that is considered a noxious weed. However, its threat potential of dominance and expansion is limited and it is typically associated with disturbed locations.

No other listed noxious weeds are known to occur on BLM administrated lands within the Robinson pasture of the Davis Creek allotment.

All 263 acres of BLM administrated lands within the Robinson Pasture of the Davis Creek allotment are meeting Public Land Health Standards for a functional plant community. A landscape that is meeting Standards has the ability to provide a greater competitive interaction with invasive, non-native species. Within the allotment there are no early seral plant communities not meeting Public Land Health Standards which are prone to the establishment of invasive, non-native species.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposal will further enhance the native vegetation through reduced use (85 days of sheep use versus 119 days) that will provide a greater competitive interaction against invasive species.

While noxious weeds readily invade rangelands at all seral stages, the rate and extent of invasion would be much less for mid and late seral rangelands with a vigorous, competitive compliment of perennial grasses and forbs. Therefore, the proposal will offer the greatest potential to maximize vigor of the vegetative component of the various ecological sites involved. These healthy sites will necessarily be more resilient to invasion by such undesirable species.

Also, the grazing permit holder (Howard Robinson) is an essential participant in the detection and eradication of noxious weeds within the confines of the allotment, including BLM and private lands. The ranch is typically the first line of defense in the long-term endeavor of controlling noxious weeds. Mr. Robinson is very active is the eradication of noxious plant species on the Robinson pasture of the Davis Creek allotment.

Environmental Consequences of the Continuation of Current Management Alternative: This alternative allows for 119 days of sheep use within the allotment, or an increase of 29% over the proposal. A longer season of use that includes an extended period of livestock use during the critical growing season is less conducive in maintaining a viable plant community that has the ability to withstand invasive plants. Therefore, there would be the potential for a downward trend in rangeland health that may allow invasive species to establish within the plant community.

As shown from the current functional state of all 263 acres of BLM lands meeting required Public Land Health Standards, Mr. Robinson has been operating in a sustainable and favorable manner in regards to a healthy landscape. However, he has not been running livestock to the full capacity of the grazing permit, therefore allowing for plant community to fully recover.

Environmental Consequences of the No Grazing Alternative: The impact of adopting this alternative would generally be similar to that of the proposed action with respect to the occurrence and proliferation of noxious weeds. However, with no grazing the BLM would lose a substantial permittee commitment to aggressive noxious weed management on both public and private lands. This sort of stewardship is one of the key reasons why there are few noxious weed infestations on the Davis Creek allotment permitted to the Howard Robinson, as he eradicates noxious weeds before they can become permanently established.

Mitigation: None

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Affected Environment: The Davis Creek allotment is comprised of two dominant vegetation communities, (1) pinyon-juniper/mountain shrub mix with a native grass understory, located on the steeper east-facing slopes, and (2) early seral Wyoming sagebrush community, currently dominated by rubber rabbitbrush with an understory comprised mainly of Kentucky bluegrass, located in the lowlands. These communities typically provide nesting habitat for a large array of migratory birds during the breeding season (May, June and July). Those bird populations identified as having higher conservation interest (i.e., Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, Partners in Flight program) that are commonly found in these habitats include the black-throated gray warbler and Virginia's warbler. None of the species associated with these communities are narrowly restricted in abundance, distribution, or habitat preference.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Although the proposed grazing schedule coincides with a portion of the breeding season, it is unlikely this action would reduce the extent or quality of habitat available for migratory bird breeding functions. Livestock use tends to be concentrated in low-lying areas, the majority of which is located on private land, where herbaceous cover is most abundant. While some of the more common species (e.g., meadowlark, Vesper's sparrow) may utilize these areas for nesting purposes, most of the species of higher conservation interest are found in mountain shrub habitats, in areas that are not heavily utilized by livestock. The allotment itself represents a small portion of habitat that is available for breeding functions within the resource area. Reduction in the days of use may potentially increase the amount of herbaceous forage and enhance groundcover for migratory birds.

Environmental Consequences of the Continuation of Current Management Alternative: Continuation of the current management alternative is not likely to have any measurable affect on the extent or quality of habitat available for migratory bird breeding functions. The most prominent difference would likely involve minor increases in the amount of herbaceous forage and groundcover available (see discussion above).

Environmental Consequences of the No Grazing Alternative: The effects of livestock removal on this allotment's vegetation resources as forage and cover for migratory birds would not be expected to differ markedly from the proposed action. The most prominent difference would likely result in minor increases in the amount of herbaceous groundcover, which in turn would result in increased numbers of species such as meadowlark and Vesper's sparrow, which are widely represented in the resource area.

Mitigation: None

THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND SENSITIVE ANIMAL SPECIES (includes a finding on Standard 4)

Affected Environment: There are no threatened, endangered or sensitive animal species that inhabit or derive important benefit from this allotment.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action would have no conceivable affect on animals listed, proposed, candidate, or petitioned for listing under the Endangered Species Act. Similarly, there are no animals considered sensitive by BLM that would be potentially influenced by this action.

Environmental Consequences of the Continuation of Current Management Alternative: None

Environmental Consequences of the No Grazing Alternative: None

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Threatened & Endangered species: The proposed and no-action alternative would have no effective influence on special status species or associated habitat and would, therefore, have no potential to influence the status of applicable land health standards.

WASTES, HAZARDOUS OR SOLID

Affected Environment: There are no known hazardous or other solid wastes on the subject lands. No hazardous materials are known to have been used, stored or disposed of at sites included in the proposed action.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: No listed or extremely hazardous materials in excess of threshold quantities are proposed for use in this project. While commercial preparations of fuels and lubricants containing hazardous constituents may be used in small quantities from time to time, they would be stored, used and transported in a manner consistent with applicable laws, and the generation of hazardous wastes would not be anticipated. A small

quantity of solid wastes, in the form of excess supplies, wrappers and assorted scrap, could be generated during construction or maintenance activities.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: No hazardous or other solid wastes would be generated under the no-action alternative.

Mitigation: The permittee should be required to collect and dispose of all solid wastes generated by her/his activities.

WATER QUALITY, SURFACE AND GROUND (includes a finding on Standard 5)

Affected Environment: The proposed permit renewal is located entirely in the Piceance Creek watershed which is a tributary to the White River. The affected pasture is situated in the headwaters of the main stem of Piceance Creek and is listed in stream segment 14 of the White River Basin. Segment 14 is comprised of the mainstem of Piceance Creek from its source to the Emily Oldland diversion dam.

A review of the Colorado's 1989 Nonpoint Source Assessment Report (plus updates), the 305(b) report, the 303(d) list and the Unified Watershed Assessment was done to see if any water quality concerns have been identified.

Stream segment 14 has not been classified as use protected thus the Antidegredation review requirements in the Antidegredation Rule are applicable to this stream segment. The state has classified stream segment 14 as beneficial for the following uses: Cold Aquatic Life 1, Recreation 1b, and Agriculture. Minimum standards for four parameters have been listed, these parameters are: dissolved oxygen = 6.0 mg/l, pH = 6.5 - 9.0, Fecal Coliform = 325/100 ml, and 205/100 ml E. coli.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Reductions in vegetal cover due to grazing (and drought conditions) may leave soils exposed to erosional processes increasing sedimentation to lower reaches of the affected watersheds. However, with implementation of the proposed grazing permit no adverse environmental consequences are anticipated.

Environmental Consequences of the Continuation of Current Management Alternative: Extended seasons of use will further reduce vegetal cover due to grazing and drought conditions. Loss of effective vegetal cover will leave soils exposed to erosional processes increasing sedimentation to lower reaches of the affected watersheds.

Environmental Consequences of the No Grazing Alternative: None

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for water quality: Water quality within the area of the proposed action currently meets water quality standards established by the state. No adverse impacts to water quality will result as a response to completion of the proposed actions.

WETLANDS AND RIPARIAN ZONES (includes a finding on Standard 2)

Affected Environment: There are no known wetlands and/or riparian zones located on BLM administrated lands within the Robinson pasture of the Davis Creek allotment. The allotment's watershed is located immediately north of Piceance Creek, which it drains into from private lands. The majority of BLM lands on the allotment are relegated to steep slopes that are not conducive to wetlands and/or riparian systems.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Livestock grazing from the Davis Creek allotment is not having any known downstream influence on wetlands and/or riparian systems.

Environmental Consequences of the Continuation of Current Management Alternative: Livestock grazing from the Davis Creek allotment is not having any known downstream influence on wetlands and/or riparian systems.

Environmental Consequences of the No Grazing Alternative: None

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for riparian systems: No wetlands and/or riparian zones are known to be located on BLM lands, thus the Public Land Health Standard for riparian systems is not applicable.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS NOT PRESENT OR NOT AFFECTED:

No ACEC's, flood plains, prime and unique farmlands, Wilderness, or Wild and Scenic Rivers, threatened, endangered or sensitive plants exist within the area affected by the proposed action. For threatened, endangered and sensitive plant species Public Land Health Standard is not applicable since neither the proposed nor the no-action alternative would have any influence on populations of, or habitats potentially occupied by, special status plants. There are also no Native American religious or environmental justice concerns associated with the proposed action.

NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS

The following elements **must** be addressed due to the involvement of Standards for Public Land Health:

SOILS (includes a finding on Standard 1)

Affected Environment: Soils analyzed in this document have been covered in the Rio Blanco County Soil Survey. The Soil Survey delineates individual soil unit polygons and associated ecological sites. The table below is derived from the Rio Blanco Soil Survey and is a breakdown of the individual soil units and associated ecological sites on BLM administered lands.

Allot	Data	Soil Unit	Ecological Site	BLM Acres
06016	2	Absarokee-Delson channery loams,8-65%slopes	Brushy Loam	26.29
06016	15	Castner channery loam, 5-50%slopes	Pinyon-Juniper woodlands	29.60
06016	53	Moyerson stony clay loam,15-65%slopes	Clayey Slopes	1.08
06016	58	Parachute Loam,25-75%sloeps	Brushy Loam	9.39
06016	76	Rhone loam,30-75%slopes	Brushy Loam	18.85
06016	84	Silas Variant loam	Mountain Swale	6.02
06016	96	Veatch channery loam,12-50%slopes	Loamy Slopes	165.83
06016	102	Work Loam, 8-15%slope	Deep Loam	5.88
			BLM Totals:	**262.94**

Soils that are occupied with plant communities rated as a mid seral, late seral, or Potential Natural Community (PNC) have sufficient cover of desirable plant species to produce adequate litter and ground cover to minimize runoff and provide for soil protection (refer to the Vegetation section below for ratings). These soils are meeting the Colorado Public Land Health Standard for upland soils.

The Robinson pasture of the Davis Creek allotment has all 263 acres BLM acres (100%) achieving Standards for Public Land Health (refer to the below Vegetation section of this document). There are no soils rated as early seral plant communities not meeting Public Land Health Standards.

Overall, all soils on BLM lands within the allotment have adequate diversity and/or cover of native plant species to provide effective ground cover to prevent overland flow, runoff, and general soil degradation.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposal would provide sufficient litter accumulation, canopy cover, and ground cover to continue on all seral classes due to grazing at an equitable and sustainable level. Thus, the proposed action will provide for plant regrowth opportunities, seed establishment, and general cover. Ground cover of native perennial plant species and litter accumulation are central in the protection and stabilization of soils. Therefore, these sites are already at and/or near potential, are meeting health standards, and will not be appreciably influenced by the proposal.

The proposal will further enhance the native vegetation through reduced use (85 days of sheep use versus 119 days) that will provide a greater competitive interaction against invasive species that provide little soil protection. All 263 acres of BLM administrated lands are meeting Public Land Health Standards for functional upland soils and will continue so under the proposal. A

landscape that is meeting Standards has a greater ability to sustain itself in the protection and retention of soils. Within the allotment there are no early seral plant communities not meeting Public Land Health Standards for upland soils.

Environmental Consequences of the Continuation of Current Management Alternative: This alternative has a longer season of livestock use that includes an extended period of use during the critical growing season. This situation is less conducive in maintaining a viable plant community that has the ability to provide adequate soil protection, thus there is a greater potential of reduced ground cover that would not provide adequate protection. Therefore, there would be the potential for a downward trend in rangeland health that may allow soil degradation.

As shown from the current functional state of all 263 acres of BLM lands meeting required Public Land Health Standards, Mr. Robinson has been operating in a sustainable and favorable manner in regards to a healthy landscape. However, he has not been running livestock to the full capacity of the grazing permit, therefore allowing for plant community to provide sufficient ground cover for the protection of soils.

Environmental Consequences of the No Grazing Alternative: Under a no grazing by livestock alternative, most localities that are being grazed by cattle would experience a short-term increase in both perennial plant cover and soil surface litter accumulation. Mid seral ecological sites would likely experience the greatest benefit of increased perennial plant cover and would continue to meet Public Land Health Standards. Soils associated with late and PNC ecological sites would continue to meet standards and experience minimal changes in plant species composition and diversity.

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Wildlife, Aquatic and Wildlife, Terrestrial: All soils within the allotment are currently meeting Public Land Health Standards. Implementation of the proposed action will enhance the ability of the rangelands to meet and continue to meet these standards.

VEGETATION (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: The following table lists the plant community appearance for the ecological sites or woodland types on allotments associated with the proposed action, along with the predominant plant species comprising the composition of each community. Forb species, though important to the diversity of a community and making up to 25 to 30% of the composition within several of the plant communities listed, are not presented in the following table because they generally are not contributors to the appearance or dominance of the community.

Ecological Site / Woodland Type	Plant Community Appearance	Predominant Plant Species in the Plant Community

Ecological Site / Woodland Type	Plant Community Appearance	Predominant Plant Species in the Plant Community
Alkaline Slopes	Sagebrush / Grass Shrubland	Wyoming big sagebrush, winterfat, low rabbitbrush, wheat grasses, Indian rice grass, squirreltail
Brushy Loam	Deciduous Shrub / Grass Shrubland	Serviceberry, oakbrush, snowberry, mountain brome, slender wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, Letterman and Columbia needle grasses
Clayey Slopes	Grassland	Salina wildrye, mutton grass, western wheatgrass, June grass, squirreltail, shadscale
Deep Loam	Grassland	Bluebunch wheatgrass, muttongrass, needle-and-thread, western wheatgrass, slender wheatgrass, big sagebrush, serviceberry, snowberry.
Loamy Slopes	Mix Shrub / Grass Shrubland	Mountain mahogany, bitterbrush, serviceberry, mountain big sagebrush, beardless bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, June grass, Indian rice grass
Mountain Swale	Grass / Open Shrub Shrubland	Basin wildrye, slender wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, Letterman and Columbia needle grasses, sedges, rushes, mountain big sagebrush, rubber rabbitbrush, snowberry,
Pinyon/Juniper	Pinyon/Juniper Woodland	Pinyon pine, Utah juniper, mountain mahogany, bitterbrush, serviceberry, Wyoming big sagebrush, beardless bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, June grass, Indian rice grass, mutton grass

The following table shows the seral rating used by the BLM to rate rangeland vegetation communities in comparison to the Potential Natural Plant Community (PNC) for a particular ecological site. Mid, late, and PNC ecological sites represent plant communities within acceptable thresholds for healthy communities and are within acceptable levels of desired plant communities (mid to PNC) as defined in the White River ROD/RMP

ECOLOGICAL SITE SIMILARITY RATINGS	
Seral Rating	**% Similarity to the Potential Natural Plant Community (PNC)**
Potential Natural community (PNC)	76-100% composition of species in the PNC
Late-Seral	51-75% composition of species in the PNC
Mid-Seral	26-50% composition of species in the PNC
Early-Seral	0-25% composition of species in the PNC

The following tables show an estimate of the public land acreage falling within one of the seral ratings for each ecological site on allotments associated with this permit renewal. These estimates are based upon professional judgments of the Rangeland Management Specialist trained in the use of the rating system. Nearly all ecological sites were visited during the 2005 field seasons for a plant community assessment of the Colorado Public Land Health Standards for each allotment. Historical grazing practices (spring use, over utilization, etc.) and prolong

drought conditions have created the situation in which most of the early seral plant communities do not meet the rangeland health standards. The early seral sites have crossed a threshold and are nearly irreversible regardless of the livestock management without some form of disturbing activity such as fire or chemicals.

Davis Creek Allotment, 06016 (Robinson Pasture) Ecological Site Similarity Rating						
Ecological Site	**BLM Acres**	**PNC**	**Late Seral**	**Mid Seral**	**Early Seral**	**BLM Acres Classified**
Brushy Loam	55	32	13	10	0	55
Clayey Slopes	1	1	0	0	0	1
Deep Loam	6	0	0	2	4	6
Loamy Slopes	166	80	86	0	0	166
Mountain Swale	6	0	0	2	4	6
Pinyon-Juniper woodlands	30	25	5	0	0	30
BLM Totals:	**263**	**138**	**104**	**14**	**8**	**264**
% BLM Acres Classified:		**52%**	**39%**	**5%**	**3%**	

As shown within the Robinson pasture of the Davis Creek allotment, 97% of the ecological sites represent plant communities within acceptable thresholds for healthy communities and within acceptable levels of desired plant communities (mid to PNC) as defined in the White River ROD/RMP. All 263 BLM acres (100%) are meeting Public Land Health Standards for functional plant communities. Vegetation production and species composition on these sites provide adequate cover for soil protection and vegetative production to meet foraging and resource demands. The early and mid seral acres (22 acres) are mostly related to past vegetation treatments (i.e. brush mowing) that shifted these sites from PNC to early seral. These early/mid sites have a dominant understory (grasses) over the previously dominant overstory (sagebrush) that provides sufficient ground cover in a functional plant community.

A significant portion of the private lands within the allotment have undergone past vegetation treatments (i.e. brush mowing) to decrease big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) dominance, thus allowing the understory of native grasses to dominate. It appears in the past that these treatments have also occurred on less then 15 acres of BLM lands located within two small drainage bottoms. Within these treatment areas, rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), and Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*) have become overly dominate in ground cover. Sagebrush is composed of approximately 32% of the canopy cover in certain treatment areas on BLM lands. Yet these treatments also released the brush understory allowing such species as western wheatgrass (Agropyron smithii), needle-and-thread-grass (*Stipa comata*) and columbia needlegrass (*Stipa columbiana*) to dominate. Overall, these treatments have not affected Health Standards on BLM administrated lands.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: All grazing will be within the rangeland's carrying capacity (AUMs) to meet Public Land Health Standards and goals set forth in the RMP (see Rangeland Management Section). As shown from past grazing use, such as low

utilization rates on key plant species, in relation to the health of the landscape, the proposal will maintain and enhance the ability of the rangelands to continue to meet Public Land Health Standards. All 263 acres of BLM administrated lands within the allotment are currently meeting Health Standards.

The proposed action will promote grazing at a moderate utilization level through a reduction in the number of sheep use days (85 days), delayed turn-out, and earlier off date. Therefore, the proposed action would give the vegetation an opportunity for seed production, replenishment of root reserves, biomass accumulation, and plant propagation to sustain itself in a functional manner. This in turn would lead to an improvement of water holding capabilities of the soil (increase surface litter) and improve chances of seedling survival necessary to maintain a healthy, reproducing plant community.

Sheep use authorized under the proposed action can effectively utilize the vegetation growing on the slopes associated with BLM administered lands on the allotment. Slopes account for approximately 214 acres, or 81%, of BLM lands on the allotment.

The proposed grazing system would have a neutral to slightly positive impact on PNC, late, mid, and early seral ecological sites, as they are already meeting or exceeding the standards for rangeland health.

The proposal will further enhance the native vegetation through reduced use (85 days of sheep use versus 119 days) that will provide a greater competitive interaction against invasive species, such as cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) that provides little resource value.

All 263 acres of BLM administrated lands are meeting Public Land Health Standards for functional plant communities and will continue under the proposal. A landscape that is meeting health standards has a greater ability to maintain its functional state in the long-term. Within the allotment there are no early seral plant communities not meeting Colorado Public Land Health Standards.

Environmental Consequences of the Continuation of Current Management Alternative: Included under this alternative are 119 days of sheep use, which is a longer season of use with an early turn-out date and a later off date. This grazing season includes a greater period of use during the critical growing season. Grazing over a longer period is less conducive in maintaining a viable plant community that has the ability to maintain itself in a functional manner, thus there is a greater potential of reduced ground cover. Therefore, there would be the potential for a downward trend in rangeland health that may allow vegetative degradation.

As shown from the current functional state of all 263 acres of BLM lands meeting required Public Land Health Standards, Mr. Robinson has been operating in a sustainable and favorable manner in regards to a maintaining a healthy landscape. However, he has not been running livestock to the full capacity of the grazing permit, therefore allowing for plant communities sufficient regrowth opportunities.

Environmental Consequences of the No Grazing Alternative: Under a no grazing by livestock alternative, most localities that are being grazed by sheep would experience a short-term increase in both perennial plant cover and soil surface litter accumulation. Early and mid seral ecological sites would likely experience the greatest benefit of increased perennial plant cover. The PNC and late seral sites would continue to meet standards and experience minimal changes in plant species composition and diversity. All acres would continue to meet Public Land Health Standards.

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Wildlife, Aquatic and Wildlife, Terrestrial)*:* Currently, 100% of the 263 BLM acres are meeting Public Land Health Standards for plant communities. Implementation of the proposed action will maintain the ability of the rangelands to continue in meeting the Standards into the future with a static to upward trend.

WILDLIFE, AQUATIC (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: There are no aquatic systems located within the allotment.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: None

Environmental Consequences of the Continuation of Current Management Alternative: None

Environmental Consequences of the No Grazing Alternative: This alternative would have no potential to affect aquatic wildlife or habitat within the allotment.

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Terrestrial): The proposed action would have no conceivable influence on aquatic wildlife or habitat conditions addressed in the Standards.

WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: The Davis Creek allotment is comprised of two dominant vegetation communities, (1) pinyon-juniper/mountain shrub mix with a native grass understory, located on the steeper east-facing slopes, and (2) early seral Wyoming sagebrush community, currently dominated by rubber rabbitbrush with an understory comprised mainly of Kentucky bluegrass, located in the lower lying areas. This allotment is used as transition range by deer and elk primarily during the spring (April/May) and fall (September – December). During allotment inspections in June 2005, BLM biologists observed no obvious instances of prolonged animal concentration or forage conditions that indicated excessive levels of seasonal use.

While raptors may opportunistically forage throughout the area, the younger-aged stands located within the allotment typically do not provide adequate nesting substrate for woodland raptors. Nongame bird communities in the allotment are representative of Wyoming big sagebrush shrublands and xeric pinyon-juniper woodlands with no apparent deficiencies in composition or abundance.

Small mammal populations are poorly documented, however, the 14 or so species that are likely to occur in this area display broad ecological tolerance and are widely distributed throughout the Great Basin and/or Rocky Mountain regions. No narrowly distributed or highly specialized species or subspecific populations are known this allotment.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action is not expected to negatively impact terrestrial wildlife or habitats. Based on ground cover conditions throughout the allotment, the timing and intensity of livestock use in conjunction with ongoing big game use have no adverse influence on the composition, vigor, or regeneration of herbaceous vegetation. Current livestock use has no apparent influence on the availability or production of woody forage for big game winter use. Reductions in days of use (119 to 85) would likely incrementally increase the availability of herbaceous forage and enhance groundcover for migratory birds and small mammals.

Environmental Consequences of the Continuation of Current Management Alternative: Continuation of the current management plan would likely not have any measurable affect on the extent or quality of habitat available for terrestrial wildlife and associated habitats (see discussion above). Incremental increases in availability of herbaceous forage may be expected.

Environmental Consequences of the No Grazing Alternative: The effects of livestock removal on this allotment's vegetation resources as forage and cover for all wildlife forms would not be expected to differ markedly from the proposed action. The most prominent difference would likely involve an incremental increase of herbaceous groundcover and woody forage.

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Aquatic): The proposed action would have no conceivable influence on terrestrial wildlife or habitat conditions addressed in the Standards.

OTHER NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS: For the following elements, only those brought forward for analysis will be addressed further.

Non-Critical Element	NA or Not Present	Applicable or Present, No Impact	Applicable & Present and Brought Forward for Analysis
Access and Transportation		X	
Cadastral Survey	X		

Non-Critical Element	NA or Not Present	Applicable or Present, No Impact	Applicable & Present and Brought Forward for Analysis
Fire Management	X		
Forest Management		X	
Geology and Minerals	X		
Hydrology/Water Rights	X		
Law Enforcement		X	
Noise	X		
Paleontology	X		
Rangeland Management			X
Realty Authorizations	X		
Recreation		X	
Socio-Economics		X	
Visual Resources		X	
Wild Horses	X		

RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

Affected Environment: Howard Robinson (0501492) is the authorized grazing permittee on the Robinson Pasture of the Davis Creek allotment (06016), thus holding preference to the existing grazing permit. The following tables show an estimated livestock carrying capacity in Animal Unit Months (AUMs) broken down by BLM acres for the Davis Creek allotment. The tables are broken down by acres within a soil unit polygon and acres/AUM for each soil unit, which determines AUMs when divided.

Davis Creek Allotment (06016), Robinson Pasture Livestock Grazing Capacity				
Soil Unit	**Ecological Site**	**BLM Acres**	**Acres / AUM**	**BLM AUMs**
Absarokee-Delson channery loams,8-65%slopes	Brushy Loam	26.29	7	4
Castner channery loam, 5-50%slopes	Pinyon-Juniper woodlands	29.60	19	2
Moyerson stony clay loam,15-65%slopes	Clayey Slopes	1.08	9	0
Parachute Loam,25-75%sloeps	Brushy Loam	9.39	7	1
Rhone loam,30-75%slopes	Brushy Loam	18.85	7	3
Silas Variant loam	Mountain Swale	6.02	5	1
Veatch channery loam,12-50%slopes	Loamy Slopes	165.83	9	18
Work Loam, 8-15%slope	Deep Loam	5.88	4	1
		262.94		**30**
			Total Acres/AUM:	**9**

All watering localities for authorized livestock on the Davis Creek allotment are limited to private lands in the form of small reservoirs. One vital reservoir for meeting livestock watering requirements is fed by a spring source also on private lands. Range improvements on BLM

lands are limited to allotment/pasture boundary fences, which are generally well maintained and functional.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Refer to the Vegetation section of this document for an analysis of rangeland vegetation impacts. The proposal maintains proper livestock distribution, an equitable 85 days of sheep use, and the proposed action's active AUMs of 30 are within the estimated livestock carrying capacity on BLM administered lands. Therefore, the proposed action would give the vegetation an opportunity for seed production, replenishment of root reserves, biomass accumulation, and plant propagation.

As shown from the current rating of all 263 BLM acres meeting Public Land Health Standards, Mr. Robinson has been responsible in actively managing the allotment in a sustainable manner. Therefore, vegetation is productive and allowing for favorable vegetative production to meeting foraging needs of livestock.

Sheep use authorized under the proposed action can effectively utilize the vegetation growing on the slopes associated with BLM administered lands on the allotment. Slopes account for approximately 214 acres, or 81%, of BLM lands on the allotment.

Implementation of the proposed action will further maintain and enhance the ability of the rangelands to meet the various Public Land Health Standards in the future.

Environmental Consequences of the Continuation of Current Management Alternative: Included under this alternative are 119 days of sheep use, which is a longer season of use with an early turn-out date and a later off date. This grazing season includes a greater period of use during the critical growing season.

Grazing over a longer period is less conducive in maintaining a viable plant community that has the ability to maintain itself in a functional manner, thus there is a greater potential of reduced ground cover and available forage for livestock in the long-term. Therefore, there would be the potential for a downward trend in rangeland health that may allow vegetative degradation.

The current authorized season of use would give Mr. Robinson a greater flexibility of utilizing the allotment during the grazing period. However, he has not been running livestock to the full capacity and/or full grazing season as outlined on the grazing permit, therefore allowing for plant communities sufficient regrowth opportunities. As shown from the current functional state of all 263 acres of BLM lands meeting required Public Land Health Standards, Mr. Robinson has been operating in a sustainable and favorable manner in regards to a healthy landscape

Environmental Consequences of the No Grazing Alternative: Under this alternative, Howard Robinson would not have the ability to authorize his existing grazing permit (0501492). Therefore, Mr. Robinson would not have a viable sheep operation as the private land and associated forage are open to BLM administered lands and would not be economically or environmentally feasible to fence separate.

Privately held forage by Mr. Robinson that is available for livestock accounts for 82% of the total forage on the Robinson pasture of the Davis Creek allotment. Without the adjoining BLM grazing permits, Howard Robinson would not be able to utilize this privately held forage. Therefore, without the BLM allocated forage and/or private forage, it would place an economical burden on the ranch and it likely would not be able to continue in its current state as a sheep operation.

Mitigation: None

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY: Cumulative impacts from the proposed action would not exceed those discussed in the White River Resource Area RMP and/or White River Resource Area Grazing Management Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

PERSONS / AGENCIES CONSULTED: A Public Notice of the NEPA action is posted on the White River Field Office Internet website at the Colorado BLM Home Page asking for public input on Grazing Permit renewals and the assessment of public land health standards within the White River Field Office area. Local notification is published in the Rio Blanco Herald Times newspaper located here in Meeker, Colorado on a monthly basis. The Grazing Advisory Board was notified of impending Grazing Permit renewals. Also, individual letters are sent to the lessees/permittees informing them that their lease is up for renewal and request any information they want included in or taken into consideration during the renewal process.

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

Name	Title	Area of Responsibility
Nate Dieterich	Hydrologist	Air Quality
Tamara Meagley	Natural Resource Specialist	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
Tamara Meagley	Natural Resource Specialist	Threatened and Endangered Plant Species
Gabrielle Elliott	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources Paleontological Resources
Jed Carling	Rangeland Specialist	Invasive, Non-Native Species
Lisa Belmonte	Wildlife Biologist	Migratory Birds
Lisa Belmonte	Wildlife Biologist	Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Animal Species, Wildlife
Vern Rholl	Supervisory NRS	Wastes, Hazardous or Solid
Nate Dieterich	Hydrologist	Water Quality, Surface and Ground Hydrology and Water Rights
Jed Carling	Rangeland Specialist	Wetlands and Riparian Zones
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Wilderness
Jed Carling	Rangeland Specialist	Soils
Jed Carling	Rangeland Specialist	Vegetation
Lisa Belmonte	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife Terrestrial and Aquatic
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Access and Transportation
Ken Holsinger	Natural Resource Specialist	Fire Management
Robert Fowler	Forester	Forest Management
Paul Daggett	Mining Engineer	Geology and Minerals
Jed Carling	Rangeland Specialist	Rangeland Management
Penny Brown	Realty Specialist	Realty Authorizations
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Visual Resources
Valerie Dobrich	Natural Resource Specialist	Wild Horses

Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Record (FONSI/DR)

CO-110-2005-123-EA

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)/RATIONALE: The environmental assessment and analyzing the environmental effects of the proposed action have been reviewed. The approved mitigation measures (listed below) result in a Finding of No Significant Impact on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary to further analyze the environmental effects of the proposed action.

DECISION/RATIONALE: It is my decision to implement the proposed action to renew the grazing permit #0501492 for a period of ten years for the Davis Creek grazing allotment as described in the proposed action with the addition of the below mitigation.

MITIGATION MEASURES:

1. Should disturbance inadvertently, unintentionally, or unknowingly occur uncovering cultural resource materials, the operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they may be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not necessary)
- a timeframe for the AO to complete an expedited review under 36 CFR 800-11 to confirm, through the State Historic Preservation Officer, that the findings of the AO are correct and that mitigation is appropriate.

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

2. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone,

with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

3. Any proposed disturbance on BLM surface will be treated as a new and independent action.

4. The permittee should be required to collect and dispose of all solid wastes generated by her/his activities.

COMPLIANCE/MONITORING: Refer to the Monitoring and Evaluation section within the proposed action of this document.

NAME OF PREPARER: Jed Carling

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Caroline Hollowed

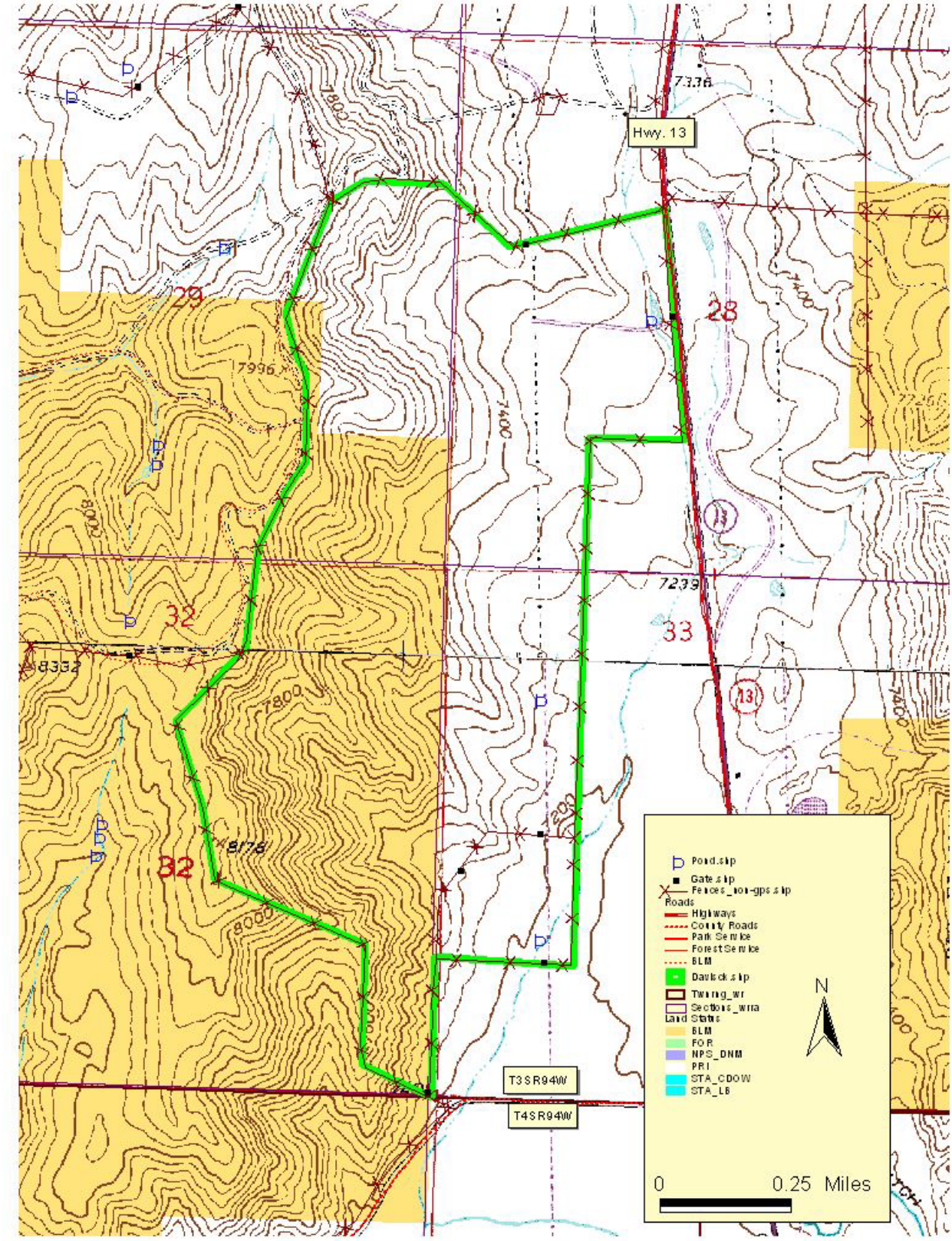
SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: Acting
Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: September 13, 2005

ATTACHMENTS: Figure 1: Map of the Proposed Action
Location Map of the Proposed Action

CO-110-2005-123 -EA 26

Figure 1: Map of the Proposed Action:



Location of Proposed Action
CO-110-2005-123-EA